

SENTENCING



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Demographics of Person Offenses in Maryland Circuit Courts, 1997-2001

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Person offenses account for approximately one-third of all single count offenses sentenced in Maryland's circuit courts from 1997 to 2001¹. Compared with female offenders (11%), males (89%) constitute the greatest percentage of sentenced offenders (Figure 1). As shown in Figure 2, Black offenders (62%) comprise the largest racial group sentenced for crimes against persons, followed by White (34%), Hispanic (3%), and Other (1%) offenders. According to the distribution of person offenses by age, young adults, aged 18 to 24, were sentenced to the greatest percentage of offenses against persons (Figure 3), and the percentage gradually drops for the subsequent age groups. This offense category also contains the largest percentage of juvenile offenders sentenced in adult criminal courts (3.5%) as compared to drug (1.1%) and property (0.8%) single count offenses.

Figure 1. — Distribution of Person Offenses by Sex

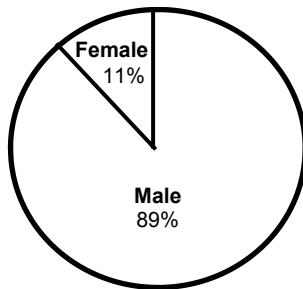


Figure 2. — Distribution of Person Offenses by Race

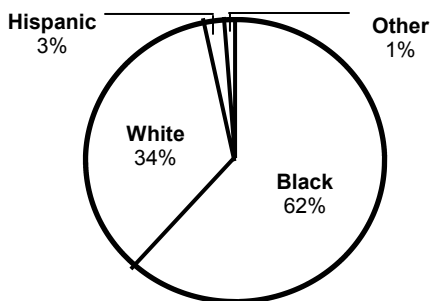
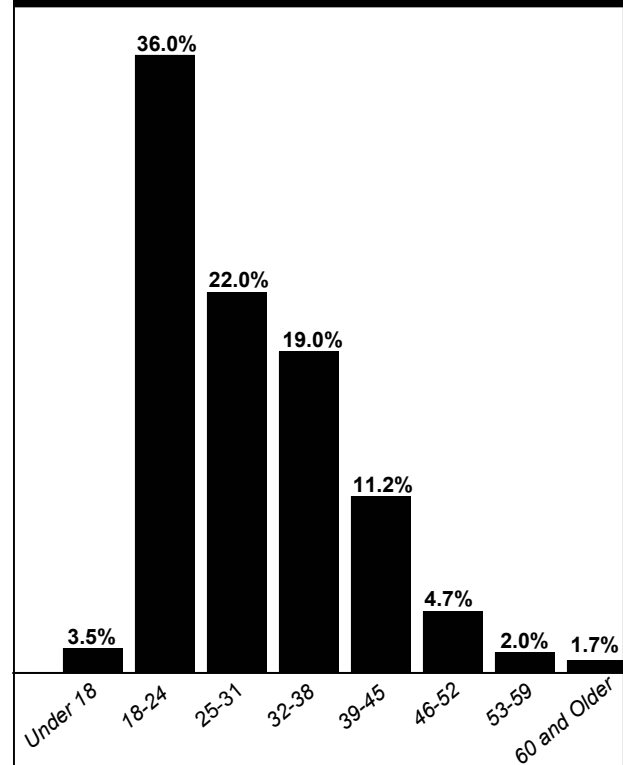


Figure 3. — Distribution of Person Offenses by Age



¹ These statistics were calculated with single count person offenses. A subsequent analysis was conducted including cases with multiple counts of person offenses and yielded slightly greater percentages for Black (69%) and male offenders (92%). The age distribution categories only changed by 2 percentage points or less.

The Maryland State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy (SCCSP) collects and reports data on sentencing practices in the State's circuit courts. "Sentencing Fax" periodically publishes information about Maryland sentencing for state courts and policy makers. Its full collection of research, data, and reports can be found on its website, www.msccsp.org.